Chapter IX

THE MONADIC THEORY OF THE ORGANISM

WE HAVE seen that, in spite of all the insistence upon the wholeness and unity of the organism, by organicists and holists, each living creature is a complex of many parts capable of being separated from one another and of continuing to exist and to be active after such separation ; and we have seen that none of the schools hitherto considered offers any theory in explanation of that wholeness and unity which every organism, even the most complex, and also the most obviously composite—namely, the colonial organism comprising many specialized individuals—unquestionably manifests,

Are we to leave this great and fundamental feature of organisms unexplained, merely accepting and asserting its existence as an ultimate truth, or ascribing it to some vaguely designated * principle ' of holism which somehow pervades all things, both great and small ?

It is difficult to believe that science will remain content with such affirmation. We have seen that no explanatory theory in terms of physics and chemistry has hitherto been devised. We have seen also that biology can no longer be content to ignore the reality and causal efficacy of the mental or psychical activities of organisms; that to ignore them is to stultify biology and perhaps to sterilize it, to render impossible any further advance of our understanding of the riddle of life.

Let us, then, explore the possibilities of explaining
the unity of the organism which are opened by frank